

A close-up photograph of a snifter glass filled with a golden-brown whisky. The glass is set against a dark background, with a light source from the side creating a bright highlight on the rim and the surface of the liquid. A circular gold emblem is embossed on the front of the glass, containing the following text:

THE
WORLD'S
MOST ADMIRED
WHISKIES
2021
DRINKS
INTERNATIONAL



IT'S ALL ABOUT
THE **WHISKEY**®



www.michters.com

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Having conducted months of background research with brands, independent whisky experts and writers, there was clearly a demand from the industry for a survey to determine The World's Most Admired Whiskies. This latest variant follows the success of our Most Admired Champagne and Wine supplements, which have become highly anticipated annual releases from *Drinks International*.

We gathered a diverse group of independent judges from around the world to form our voting Academy. It features experts from every continent and is representative of the global whisky industry. But to ensure we got a truly international spread of brands it was important to limit each voter to five whiskies from the same category, thus avoiding a Canadian whiskey expert, for example, from placing all 10 votes on Canadian malts. Furthermore, the independent nature of our voters gives real weight to the list and provides invaluable insight into the perceptions of different brands within our industry.

Our inaugural top spot went to Yamazaki, which highlights just how revered Japanese whiskies are around the world. Irish label Redbreast stormed to the runner-up spot for 2021 as the demand for premium single pot still whiskey continues to grow.

Completing the podium is Islay brand Lagavulin, and of the nine active distilleries on the Scottish island, eight made our list of 50 Most Admired Whiskies – which goes to show just how much influence the small island has on the world of whisky.

Overall, Scotch came out on top, as expected, making up almost half the list, while American and world whiskies took virtually an even share of the votes, leaving Irish the lesser represented of the 'big four' regions. Interestingly, this ratio stays almost exactly the same when we expand our sights to the top 100 brands voted for by our Academy, which adds further authority to our findings. It will be fascinating to see how the list evolves in 2022.

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HOW WE DID IT

THE METHODOLOGY BEHIND THE VOTING PROCESS EXPLAINED
BY SHAY WATERWORTH

Drinks International has used its widespread contacts within the global whisk(e)y industry to choreograph an elite voting Academy to determine the inaugural list of The World's Most Admired Whiskies. Our Academy consists of buyers, bar owners, writers, educators and other specialists who carry no affiliation with any brand to ensure that the results burden no bias and retain integrity across the board.

We asked each of our experts

to name 10 whisk(e)y brands they most admire, in descending order. They were asked to consider the following criteria:

- The quality and consistency of the whiskies in the brand range
- The price-to-quality ratio across the brand portfolio
- The strength of the branding and marketing

The votes are weighted, so a brand was awarded 10 points if it secured a first-place vote, nine points for second, eight points for third and so on. However, given the specialist nature of



**OUR ACADEMY
FEATURES SOME
OF THE MOST
RESPECTED
WHISKY NAMES
FROM AROUND
THE WORLD**

whisk(e)y and the widespread geography of our Academy, voters were limited to five brands from the same category. We then compiled the numbers to determine the final ranking.

Our Academy features some of the most respected whisk(e)y names from around the world and we work hard to ensure that there is a broad geographical and demographic spread. We consider it to be the most influential group of global whisk(e)y experts ever assembled. Voting took place during September 2021.



1 YAMAZAKI



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: JAPAN
OWNER: SUNTORY

Japanese icon Yamazaki has been crowned the most admired whisky brand in the world in our inaugural poll. Dubbed “the pioneer of Japanese whisky” by its owner, Suntory, Yamazaki is Japan’s first malt distillery and was founded by Shinjiro Torii in the early 20th century.

From there Yamazaki has grown in size and reputation to become Suntory’s flagship distillery and produces some of the best whiskies in the world, including Yamazaki Mizunara as well as its 12, 18 and 25 Year Old single malts, which are rare

commodities in some countries.

Today the brand is led by master blender Shinji Fukuyo, one of the most respected members of the whisky industry.

Fukuyo is only the third person to hold this prestigious role and has been a key member of the tasting panel of the International Spirits Challenge for several years.

Earlier this year, Yamazaki released 100 bottles of a 55 Year Old single malt, the oldest in the brand’s history and valued at \$60,000. The whisky is a marriage of three rare single malts, of which one was distilled under the watch of distillery founder Torii in 1960.

“Throughout the process of blending Yamazaki 55, I used as inspiration the passage of time and ‘wabi-sabi’ – the Japanese belief that imperfections can help to ultimately contribute to perfection,” said Fukuyo.

“Blending is one technique which brings together and combines imperfect liquids to as perfect a liquid as possible.”

These are exciting times for Yamazaki, which is gearing up to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2023. It can now add the title of the World’s Most Admired Whisky brand to its extensive collection of accolades, giving the team further cause for celebration. 🍷



**EARLIER THIS
YEAR, YAMAZAKI
RELEASED 100
BOTTLES OF A 55
YEAR OLD SINGLE
MALT, VALUED AT
\$60,000**

2 REDBREAST

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: IRELAND
OWNER: IRISH DISTILLERS

As the biggest-selling single pot still Irish whiskey brand, Redbreast has garnered wide adoration from the global drinks trade. The first mention of 'Redbreast' dates back to the early 20th century, when wine merchant W&A Gilbey began referencing it on bottles in Dublin.

By 1925 premium whiskey was a luxury beyond the means of most people due to the post-war depression and political turmoil, meaning it gained popularity among wealthy clergymen and Redbreast was tagged with the nickname 'the priest's bottle'.

Since its acquisition by Pernod Ricard's Irish Distillers in the 1980s, the brand has been a driving force behind the renaissance of premium Irish whiskey, bringing it back to the spotlight of the global industry.

Today, Redbreast 12 is the flag-bearer of the brand while there are a number of cask strength and barrel-finished whiskeys. Its latest release, the Iberian Series, features a Pedro Ximénez Edition to sit alongside the Lustau Edition, brought to market in 2016.

Dave McCabe, blender at Irish Distillers, said: "The



THE PEDRO XIMÉNEZ EDITION WAS THANKS TO STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND GOOD FORTUNE

creation of the Redbreast Pedro Ximénez Edition came about thanks to strong relationships and good fortune. A number of years ago, our friends at Antonio Páez Lobato Cooperage in Jerez presented us with an exceptional opportunity to trial casks which had

been pre-seasoned with Pedro Ximénez sherry for two years. Finding that the wood contributed a very different flavour profile to the traditional Spanish sherry cask, we finished our Redbreast whiskey in these hogsheads for between 12 and 22 months,

adding a distinctive twist to the signature Redbreast character.

"Underpinned by the much-loved Redbreast Lustau Edition, each subsequent expression in this series will represent a new chapter in exploring the casks, flavours and aromas from this region."



3 LAGAVULIN

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: DIAGEO

This year's most admired Scotch whisky brand comes from Islay through Diageo's Lagavulin.

The brand's 16 Year Old expression is widely regarded as a classic among industry experts and it's so popular that demand often outstrips

production, which Diageo compensates for by releasing an annual 12 Year Old cask strength expression to take the strain.

With more than 200 years of whisky-making history behind it, Lagavulin is one of the most respected whisky brands in the world. Long distillation in pear-shaped stills is credited with aiding its round character.



LONG
DISTILLATION
IN PEAR-SHAPED
STILLS IS CREDITED
WITH AIDING
ITS ROUND
CHARACTER

This summer, the brand released an 11 Year Old, which was finished for four months in Guinness beer casks and was launched in partnership with actor Nick Offerman.

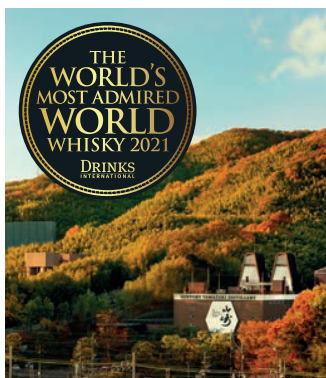
In September, Lagavulin launched a 26 Year Old single malt finished in first-fill Pedro Ximénez and oloroso sherry casks as part of Diageo's annual Special Releases collection.





BEST OF THE BEST

WHILE IT'S AN INCREDIBLE ACHIEVEMENT TO FEATURE ON THE LIST OF 50 MOST ADMIRERD WHISKIES, FURTHER RECOGNITION MUST GO TO THOSE BRANDS TOPPING THE FOUR MAJOR CATEGORIES OUR ACADEMY WAS INVITED TO VOTE ON – SCOTCH, IRISH, AMERICAN AND WORLD WHISKIES



MOST ADMIRERD WORLD WHISKY

Suntory's Yamazaki automatically takes the award for Most Admired World Whisky as it finished number one overall. The Suntory distillery in the Mishima District of Osaka is responsible for creating this exquisite single malt, which is highly revered for its flawless precision and impeccable consistency.

Japanese whisky on the whole has gained a significant following in the US and Europe over the past decade and Yamazaki has led from the front, offering a premium range of finely tuned expressions. While its Mizunara expressions always chase top price points, the recent launch of its 55 Year Old made headlines across the industry.

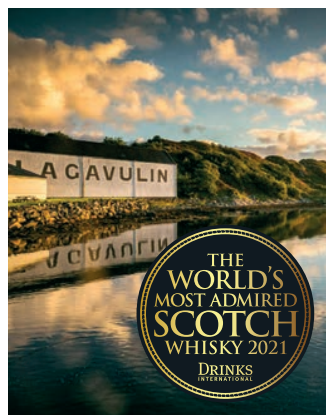
Yamazaki was selected by more than 40% of our Academy as one of their 10 Most Admired Whiskies, making it a truly classic brand in the trade.

MOST ADMIRERD SCOTCH WHISKY

The Most Admired Scotch Whisky brand in 2021 is Diageo's Lagavulin. With the extensive history of distillation on Islay it's no surprise to see one of its oldest and most respected producers come out on top.

Lagavulin was chosen as one of The World's Most Admired Whiskies by almost a quarter of our Academy members and the peated malt was the number one choice of experts across Europe, the US and Canada.

Unsurprisingly, Scotch came out on top overall, with 23 of the 50 brands originating from the birthplace of whisky. Of these brands, eight of the nine active distilleries on Islay made the cut, which highlights the influence that the whiskies born on the small island have on the global trade.



MOST ADMIRERD IRISH WHISKY

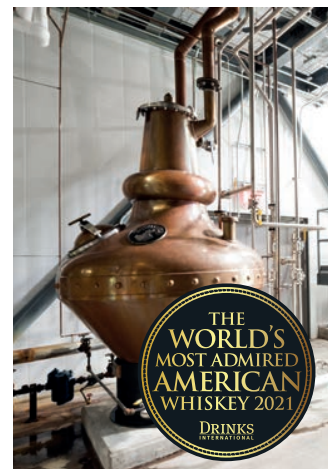
The powerful influence of Irish Distillers has been behind the rise of premium pot still whiskey brand Redbreast since its acquisition in 1988. Today, the brand is sailing high at the very top of the Irish whiskey sector and is the bestselling single pot still whiskey in the world.

As the second Most Admired Whiskey brand in the world, it's no surprise that it received a vote from a third of our Academy. A combination of Redbreast's fascinating history, expert craftsmanship and extensive stocks is what makes the brand so highly revered in the industry and, under the fine leadership of master blender Billy Leighton, the whiskey is certainly in safe hands moving forward.

MOST ADMIRERD AMERICAN WHISKY

Michter's has become one of the most popular bourbon brands within the global bar trade over the past decade due to its presence at major events such as The World's 50 Best Bars – of which you'd be hard pushed to find one not serving the ultra-premium whiskey.

Its influence is so vast in the high-end on-trade that it raised a staggering £166,000 from a private barrel selection bottling in aid of the 50 Best For Recovery programme. Michter's probably has the strongest relationship of any whiskey brand with the elite bar trade and credit must go to Joseph and Matt Magliocco for representing the whiskey at just about every trade show and industry event around the world.



4 MICTHER'S

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: CHATHAM IMPORTS

The Michter's brand that has become so admired among whiskey lovers is really from a phoenix distillery, reborn in the mid-1990s in Kentucky thanks to Joseph J Magliocco and his consultant and mentor Richard 'Dick' Newman, but its roots run deep and cross state lines.

The distillery that would become Michter's was founded around 1753 by Swiss Mennonite brothers Johann and Michael Shenk in Schaefferstown, Pennsylvania.

Shenk's was among the earliest American whiskeys to use rye from its own grain fields and its reputation became such that George Washington purchased whiskey from the distillery to warm his troops in the winter of 1778.

It wasn't until the 1950s that the distillery adopted the name we know today, a portmanteau of Michael and Peter, the sons of then distillery co-owner Lou Forman.

By 1989, with American whiskey out of favour with consumers, the distillery declared bankruptcy and the premises were abandoned. Several years later Magliocco and Newman obtained the unused Michter's trademark and relocated the brand to Kentucky and the heart of the modern American whiskey industry.

Today, Michter's 78,000 sq ft Louisville distillery has a reputation for quality whiskey that really runs the gamut. Yes, it's possible to buy an entry-level release for £50, but many of Michter's bottlings are placed in that rarefied echelon of American whiskeys that are virtually impossible to



pick up at the recommended retail price.

When Pam Heilmann replaced Willie Pratt as master distiller in 2016, she became the first female master distiller at a Kentucky Distillers' Association distillery since the Prohibition era, and in July 2020, the brand made history again when a donated private barrel selection bottling of Michter's 10 Year Old bourbon



**IN 2020 MICTHER'S
10 YEAR OLD
SOLD FOR A
RECORD £166,000
AT THE 50 BEST
FOR RECOVERY
CHARITY AUCTION**

sold for a record £166,000 at the 50 Best for Recovery charity auction to raise money for bars and restaurants impacted by the Covid pandemic.

The brand began shipping the 2021 bottling of its Toasted Barrel Finish bourbon in September, the first release of the whiskey since 2018, alongside the latest edition of its 10 Year Old.

5. THE BALVENIE

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: WILLIAM GRANT & SONS

The number one Speyside whisky in this year's list is from the only distillery in Scotland which is still growing its own barley. The Balvenie distillery also uses traditional floor maltings and keeps both a coppersmith and a team of coopers on site, making it a brand running on truly traditional methods. The distillery was built by William Grant in 1892 and with such extensive history behind the brand it has become one of the most admired single malts in the business.

Over the past 50 years, The Balvenie has introduced its series of cask finished whiskies, a process developed by legendary master blender David Stewart, who joined the company in 1962 as an apprentice. His innovative work is responsible for the brand's flagship expressions, such as Doublewood 12 and Caribbean Cask 14 and Stewart has been a key member of the International Spirits Challenge judging panel for the past 15 years.

The Balvenie is also renowned for its old and rare whiskies, which range up to 50 Years Old. One of its most recent releases is a 21 Year Old expression called The Second Red Rose, which has been finished in ex-Shiraz casks. It is the fifth member of the brand's Stories line of whiskies, which debuted in 2019, highlighting the forward-thinking nature of such a traditional brand.



6. ARDBEG

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: MOËT HENNESSY

Ardbeg's ascension to its stature as a beacon of Islay hasn't been smooth. The McDougall family officially established the distillery on the south coast of Islay in 1815 and by 1886 it was producing 300,000 litres a year. However, due to the global whisky downturn in the 1970s, the distillery ceased all production in 1981. Sporadic production resumed in 1989, but by 1996 it was silent again. In 1997, the distillery was bought by Glenmorangie, full production resumed a year later and, at the turn of the millennium, Ardbeg 10 Year Old launched alongside the Ardbeg Committee, ensuring "the doors of the Distillery never close again". Since then, numerous acclaimed bottlings have been released, usually carrying Ardbeg's distinctive profile of smoke kept in balance by seaspray and fruit. In 2011, samples of Ardbeg spirit and wood particles were sent to the International Space Station for an investigation into zero-gravity maturation. In 2015, Ardbeg celebrated its bicentenary by launching Ardbeg Perpetuum and releasing the findings from the zero-gravity maturation. Recently, the distillery has gone through a transition. Mickey Heads, an Islay native and the distillery's general manager since 2007, retired after a 13-year tenure. Ardbeg marked the departure by launching Arrrrrrrdbeg, a whisky matured in ex-rye whisk casks and exclusively available to the brand's Committee members. The release is one of several new bottlings, including a 25 Year Old expression and the limited-edition Ardbeg Scotch, released for Islay's annual Fèis Ìle Festival of Music & Malt. The distillery has grown too – for much of its life the two pot stills have produced about 10,000 barrels, or 1.4 million litres, of spirit annually, but in March this year, a new shoreline stillhouse was unveiled, doubling Ardbeg's output.

8 SPRINGBANK

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: J&A MITCHELL & CO

The Mitchell clan founded the Springbank distillery in 1828 in the town of Campbeltown on the Kintyre peninsula. The small town of 5,000 inhabitants once proclaimed itself the whisky capital of the world thanks to its 34 working distilleries, but now only three distilleries operate. Springbank has managed to endure, and more impressively still, always under the ownership of the Mitchell family. Nearly 200 years on from its origin, the brand has a continued commitment to tradition – every stage of production, from malting the barley to bottling the finished whisky, are still carried out by hand at the distillery. In the past decade, Springbank's standing among whisky collectors has exploded. Bottles of the 21 Year Old malt that sold for £50 less than 10 years ago now fetch upwards of £600 at auction, and in September this year a 5cl miniature of Springbank single malt whisky distilled in 1919 sold for a record £6,440. Given its status and performances at auction, Springbank has become a favourite for investors in recent years, topping consecutive editions of Rare Whisky 101's investor rankings, a league table of brands sought out by connoisseurs, collectors and investors. Recently, the brand released a number of new expressions, including the 2021 edition of Springbank's 25 Year Old single malt aged in sherry, bourbon and rum casks, the 2021 edition of Springbank 18, aged in sherry and bourbon casks, and the cask strength Springbank 12. Unsurprisingly, they're all now out of stock.



8

7 BRUICHLADDICH



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: REMY COINTREAU

Bruichladdich is widely regarded as one of the most progressive Scotch brands in the business. The distillery was built in 1881 on the western shore of Islay and has changed ownership several times throughout its extensive history. Prior to its acquisition by Rémy Cointreau in 2012, the brand exploded on to the international scene under the ownership of Mark Reynier. Known for its contemporary packaging and innovative style, Bruichladdich retains the traditions of

Scotch production. The brand also holds traceability and provenance in high importance and The Classic Laddie is made from 100% Scottish-grown barley, with every bottle carrying the promise "to push the boundaries of the concept of terroir in artisanal single malt whisky".

Bruichladdich produces unpeated single malt, which is unusual as Islay whiskies generally use the local peat to create a smoky profile. It is the only distillery to bottle its liquid on the island and its flagship The Classic Laddie is said to get its salt-citrus notes from the impact of the Atlantic ocean, to which the distillery is exposed on the coast.

The light-blue packaging makes for one of the most recognisable bottles behind any bar around the world and was a true statement when it launched in 2001 under Reynier.

9 CHICHIBU



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: JAPAN
OWNER: VENTURE WHISKY

One of the most sought-after Japanese whiskies in the world was founded by Ichiro Akuto in 2004 and has gathered a cult following within the global whisky industry. What sets the brand apart is Akuto's attention to detail, such as malting Chichibu's own barley in England and building its own casks, while limited volumes of each release make the brand

one of the most in-demand.

Akuto is one of the best-known members of the Japanese whisky industry and won the Master Blender of the Year award at the International Spirits Challenge in 2019 due to the ongoing success of his brand. When Akuto attends a trade show there's often a crowd of whisky fans gathered around the stall, taking the rare opportunity to try his rare drams. Chichibu's young bottlings are renowned globally for their ability to age quickly in the perceived harsh climate of the Kanto region, 100km north west of Tokyo.

While the brand is famous for its scarce single malts, Ichiro's Malt & Grain blend is by far Chichibu's biggest selling variety and, despite Japan's inward attitude towards trading stocks, Akuto takes pride in actively seeking grain whisky and other materials from abroad.

10 HIBIKI



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: JAPAN
OWNER: SUNTORY

Suntory launched Hibiki in 1989 to celebrate the beverage giant's 90th birthday and it has gone on to become Japan's most decorated blended whisky. Originally launching with expressions carrying 17 and 21 year age statements, a 30 Year Old expression was added to the range in 1997, and the 12 Year Old was introduced in 2009. More than 30 malt and mellow grain whiskies from the Yamazaki, Hakushu and Chita distilleries are used in each expression, created through an exhaustive process that sees master blender Shinji Fukuyo taste more than 300 whisky samples a day, a dedication to the words of founder Shinjiro Torii that "to become a blender at Suntory, one needs to be able to communicate with whiskies that cannot speak".

This attention to detail and persistence of craft gained the brand an international following and a reputation as one of the world's finest blended whiskies. In 2003, Hibiki 17 Year Old even had a cameo in Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*, advertised by the ageing actor Bob Harris, portrayed by Bill Murray. More recently, the brand emerged unscathed from new Japanese whisky regulations that saw other brands required to include

disclaimers in their marketing material about the origin of the spirits. The brand also recently launched the 2021 bottling of Hibiki Blossom Harmony. Released to coincide with Japan's cherry blossom season, the limited edition saw the classic Hibiki blend mixed with whisky aged in sakura cherry wood barrels.

11 BUNNAHABHAIN



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: DISTELL

Founded in 1881, Bunnahabhain initially traded its whiskies for supplies with mainland Scotland and it wasn't until 1960 when the first road was built to the distillery, allowing a much easier supply of goods. This led to a spike in demand and the installation of a further two stills, and by 1979 the Islay brand launched its now world-renowned 12 Year Old single malt to the market.

Remarkably, it wasn't until 1993 that Bunnahabhain stopped using ships as a means of transport for supplies and whisky and it's been more than a decade since it returned to non-chill filtration and using natural colour. There are currently four core single malts in the portfolio. This spring the brand's parent company, Distell, appointed Islay expert Brendan McCarron master distiller, which is sure to push the brand to new heights.

12 NIKKA

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: JAPAN
OWNER: ASAHI

In 1918, Masataka Taketsuru travelled to Scotland and enrolled at the University of Glasgow, before taking on three separate apprenticeships at Scotch distilleries. He returned to Japan in 1920 and was employed by Shinjiro Torii to help build the Yamazaki distillery before setting up his own site in Yoichi, Hokkaido, where in 1940 he launched the first expression of Nikka.

Today Nikka is one of the world's most respected whiskies and its Nikka Whisky From The Barrel can be found in most of The World's 50 Best Bars. Its popularity among the elite on-trade is so strong that it currently sits top of the Bestselling and Top Trending lists in *Drinks International's* annual Brands Report. The blended whisky was first released in 1985 and uses more than 100 batches of malt and grain whiskies during production. As well as being a reliable whisky for the trade for nearly 40 years, its distinguishable square bottle makes it recognisable all over the world.

12



13 JOHNNIE WALKER



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: DIAGEO

Not only is Johnnie Walker one of the highest volume Scotch whisky blends on the market, it's now among the Most Admired too. Its flagship Black Label is a 12 Year Old blend first introduced in 1909 and which uses 40 different whiskies from a selection of Diageo's extensive portfolio of distilleries to make up the final formula.

The past few decades of Johnnie Walker have been guided by the safe hands of master blender Dr Jim Beveridge, who has the mammoth task of looking after more barrels of whisky than there are people in Scotland – more than 10 million.

Earlier this year the brand opened its new visitor centre in Edinburgh's Princes Street as the centrepiece of Diageo's £185m investment in Scotch whisky tourism. The 71,500 sq ft space takes whisky experiences to new heights and showcases the influence of and admiration for the brand worldwide.

14 BOWMORE



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: BEAM SUNTORY

Yet another classic Islay malt has made the list, this time

15 THE MACALLAN

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: EDRINGTON GROUP

The Macallan is without doubt one of the most iconic single malt whiskies in the world. The brand is synonymous with luxury lifestyles and commands some of the highest price points on the market. In 2018 two rare bottles of The Macallan 1926 sold for \$1.2m in Dubai airport

duty free and in the same year the brand opened its jaw-dropping £140m distillery in Speyside, which was awarded the RIAS Andrew Doolan architectural prize the following year.

The distillery boasts an impressive 36 copper pot stills and a single 17-tonne mash tun, which is thought to be the biggest in Scotland.

While the brand never discloses its exact annual sales figures, it's believed to be one of the highest-selling single malt Scotches on the market and, with seven ranges plus limited and travel retail exclusives, it has one of the widest offerings in the business.



15

Beam Suntory's Bowmore. Said to be the first licensed distillery on the island, Bowmore has almost 250 years of history on the shores of Lochindaal. Bowmore's 12, 15, 18 and 25 Year Old single malts make up its core range, while it also boasts a strong portfolio of rare, limited and travel retail exclusive whiskies. One of its most recent activations was the launch of its travel retail range in partnership with luxury car brand Aston Martin this summer. The first release in the partnership saw the rebranding of Bowmore's existing 10, 15 and 18 Year Old expressions to feature some of Aston

Martin's most recognisable and innovative cars.

Manuel Gonzalez, Bowmore brand director for global travel retail, said: "Our partnership with Aston Martin is a further example of how we are investing in the premiumisation of our GTR portfolio through a combination of exciting innovations and special limited editions.

"The Designed by Aston Martin collection continues to highlight the ambition that we have for the Bowmore brand and provides our clients with new concepts with strong consumer appeal, alongside vital growth opportunities."

THE DESIGNED BY
ASTON MARTIN
COLLECTION
HIGHLIGHTS THE
AMBITION WE
HAVE FOR THE
BOWMORE BRAND



17 TEELING

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: IRELAND
OWNER: TEELING

When brothers Jack and Stephen Teeling opened the Teeling Distillery in the Liberties area of Dublin in 2015, it was the first new whiskey distillery to have opened in the city for over 125 years.

It's now firmly established as a trailblazer within the burgeoning Irish whiskey category, a beacon of craft distilling that has helped to redefine the monocultural Irish whiskey reputation that had been developing. This craft attitude has made the brand a hit in the world's best cocktail bars, as Teeling moved up to the second bestselling Irish whiskey in the 2021 *Drinks International Annual Brand Report*.

Through their thoughtful cask maturations and finishes, the Teeling brothers have succeeded in making compelling Irish single malt, recently unveiling a fourth 18 Year Old bottling of The Renaissance from the limited-edition series, and the Teeling 13 Year Old Irish Single Grain, which is matured for nine years in ex-bourbon barrels before being given an extra four years in ex-Bordeaux red wine casks.

Now available in 75 countries, the brand continues to expand into the emerging markets, a strategy that saw Teeling Whiskey profits increase 71% in 2020, reaching €2.8m despite Covid challenges.



16 WOODFORD RESERVE



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: BROWN-FORMAN

Woodford Reserve is one of the most respected American whiskey brands. Although only introduced by Brown-Forman in 1996, the distillery which now makes the whiskey was originally known as Old Oscar Pepper Distillery and was built in 1838, making it one of the oldest in Kentucky.

Following a series of acquisitions, Brown-Forman purchased the property for a

second time in 1993 and master distiller Chris Morris has played a key role in the brand's development for the past 18 years.

The latest innovation by Morris and his team, Chocolate Malt Whisper, was released as part of the brand's annual Distillery Series this year. As the name suggests, the Kentucky straight bourbon carries a chocolate flavour, which was



SOMETIMES UNFORESEEN DEVELOPMENTS OCCUR IN THE DISTILLERY THAT RESULT IN GREAT FLAVOURS

accidentally carried over from a previous Chocolate Malt rye distillation.

"Sometimes unforeseen developments occur in the distillery that result in great flavours," said Morris. "This is one of those cases."

18 FOUR ROSES



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: KIRIN BREWING COMPANY

The third Most Admired American whiskey on our list is Four Roses bourbon, based in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky. It is the only bourbon distillery to combine five separate yeast strains with two different

mashbills to create 10 whiskies, which are then combined to create the flagship Four Roses expression.

Four Roses was founded by Paul Jones Jr in the late 1800s and, having become the top-selling bourbon in the US, it was acquired by Seagram in 1943, discontinued domestically and converted into an export whiskey.

However, when it was purchased by the Kirin Brewery Company in 2002, the brand once again returned to the US market, where it remains one of the major players today.

Every year Four Roses launches a limited-edition small batch, which sells out almost immediately from its distillery. The 2021 edition carries the highest abv to date (57.2%) and is a combination of four of the brand's 10 recipes.

20 UNCLE NEAREST



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: UNCLE NEAREST DISTILLERY

Named after a former slave called Nathan Green, who developed the recipes and techniques used to make Uncle Nearest, this Tennessee spirit has gained a cult following among American whiskey fans around the world.

Uncle Nearest was the nickname given to Green, who is recognised as the first African-American master distiller on record in the US.

He is said to have taught Jack Daniel himself to make Tennessee whiskey after the Civil War, and Green is also credited with developing the sugar maple charcoal filtering method used to make the majority of the Tennessee whiskey produced today.

Uncle Nearest has three expressions, the flagship being its 1856 Premium Aged, which is a blend of whiskeys aged between eight and 14 years old. The brand's small batch and single barrel editions, meanwhile, are some of the most respected and sought after in the US market.

21 GLENDRONACH



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: BROWN-FORMAN

Glendronach was one of the first licensed distilleries in Scotland, having been built in 1826 and becoming the largest duty-paying producer in the Highlands by the 1860s. Having undergone several acquisitions in subsequent years, the distillery was mothballed under the ownership of Allied



19

19 LAPHROAIG

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: BEAM SUNTORY

The famed green bottle of Laphroaig is recognised by almost every whisky drinker in every corner of the globe. One of the best-known Islay single malts, its bold, peated character has been bottled for around 200 years and is a favourite dram among A-list celebrities such

as Joe Rogan, who regularly sips on the Scotch while recording his influential podcasts.

Significant news for Laphroaig broke during the production of this year's World's Most Admired Whiskies as the brand's longest serving distillery manager, John Campbell, announced his decision to move on after 27 years in the role.

His influence on the brand has been significant since he joined in 1994, as Laphroaig has grown to become a global light of the industry under the ownership of Beam Suntory.

Distillers before reopening in 2002. After a further three takeovers, Glendronach has been under the control of Brown-Forman since 2016, meaning it's been owned by pretty much every major player in the business.

The brand's core range and limited releases are some of the most revered in the Scotch business and earlier this year Glendronach's Cask Bottling Batch 18 was sold in the US for the first time.

"The Glendronach Cask Bottling Batch 18 is a celebration of the distillery's time-honoured mastery and a showcase of the finest of what this richly-sherried Highland single malt Scotch whisky has to offer," said master blender Rachel Barrie.

22 COTSWOLDS



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: ENGLAND
OWNER: COTSWOLDS DISTILLERY

Arguably one of the biggest surprises in this year's list is the inclusion of Cotswolds. Not only is it fantastic news for the English whisky category, but it's a true testament of

the hard work and excellent craftsmanship which goes into the young brand.

In fact, having only launched its inaugural single malt in 2017, it is the youngest brand on the list, yet our Academy of experts makes it one of The World's Most Admired Whiskies.

Its flagship single malt is made from local barley, which is matured in a combination of first-fill ex-bourbon barrels and specially shaved, toasted and re-charred red wine casks.

Since its initial launch, Cotswolds has gone on to release a series of cask-finished expressions, including ex-sherry, peated, Sauternes and even Pineau des Charentes casks, which have caught the eye of the whisky industry.

23 GLENFARCLAS



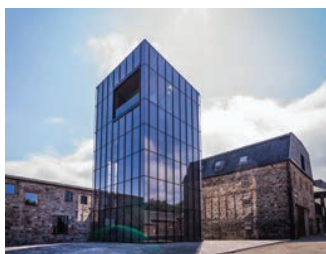
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: J&G GRANT

Sitting in the moors of Banffshire, a mile from the River Spey, is the family-run Glenfarclas distillery. The Highland distillery has been run by six generations of the Grant family and ages almost all of its single malts solely in sherry butts, making it a global leader in one of the most popular styles of single malt.

Glenfarclas also has an extensive range of vintage releases, ranging from 1952-1994, and in 2014 the distillery launched its 60 Year Old, which is testament to its rich history in whisky maturation.

In 1973 the brand opened one of the first visitor centres in Scotland, demonstrating the forward-thinking nature of Glenfarclas, yet simultaneously the brand keeps its traditional processes firmly at the centre of its production.

25 GLENMORANGIE



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: MOËT HENNESSY

Whisky has been produced at Glenmorangie's distillery in the Scottish Highlands since William Matheson bought a

24 KAVALAN

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: TAIWAN
OWNER: KING CAR

When King Car Group released the first Kavalan whisky in 2008, Taiwan's relationship with whisky was one of consumption, but the group's founder, Lee Tien-Tsai, aspired to create a "new whisky homeland". Set on producing quality single malt without compromise, King Car imported two copper stills from Scotland and brought in the legendary Dr Jim Swan as the

distillery's technical consultant. Since mid-2013, when Kavalan whiskies were first made available outside of Taiwan and China, the brand's bottlings have received international plaudits and have built a reputation for outperforming the competition in blind tastings.

Kavalan has remained a critical darling, and at the 2021 International Spirits Challenge amassed a medal haul that included 12 golds. It was named World Whisky Producer for the second year running. Recent releases have seen the brand show greater experimentation in presentation – a series of gift sets inspired by the country's local animals and a limited-edition series of bottlings in collaboration with artist Paul Chiang.



whisky production licence for a brewery site near the Tarlogie Springs in 1843.

In 1977, the number of stills doubled and did so again in 1990. An additional four stills brought the total number to 12 in 2009, by which time the brand had been bought by LVMH for around £300m. Led by the creativity of Dr Bill Lumsden, the Highland distillery has earned its reputation as a site for experimentation. The brand is credited with kickstarting the trend for finishing whisky in fine wine casks and has released several inventive bottlings, such as the mocha-inspired Glenmorangie Signet. In this spirit, Glenmorangie opened the Lighthouse, the brand's first innovation distillery created for experimentation. "Our Lighthouse is the new home of imagination," said Lumsden. "Here, we'll indulge our most fantastical ideas as we strive to create a whole array of different

flavours. We will play with raw ingredients and make small adjustments and big changes in ways never tried before. Nothing is off limits, as long as it's delicious."

26 GLEN SCOTIA



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: LOCH LOMOND GROUP

This Campbeltown single malt has been producing whisky since 1832 and the distillery is said to be haunted to this day by previous owner Duncan McCallum.

However, one of the Glen Scotia's more tangible assets

is its almost fully original distillery, which dates back to the 19th century and remains one of just three distilleries left in the once densely populated whisky region.

As well as producing world-class single malts, Glen Scotia has put a lot of energy into tracing back Campbeltown's rich distilling history. At the time, Campbeltown was known as the "whisky capital of the world". Earlier in the year the brand appealed to the drinks trade to share photographs which showcase this.

Iain McAlister, master distiller and distillery manager at Glen Scotia, said: "The contribution Campbeltown has made to Scotch is incomparable and we are proud to continue to fly the flag for the region around the world.

"Whisky was a way of life in our coastal town for over 100 years and over time, all that experience, craft and passion has been poured into Glen Scotia."

KA VA LAN

SINGLE MALT
WHISKY

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Taiwan's Pioneering Whisky



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28 KYRÖ

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: FINLAND
OWNER: KYRÖ DISTILLERY COMPANY

The Kyrö origin story reads like a Finnish cliché. As it goes, it was an idea born between friends, sat in a sauna and pondering why nobody was making rye whisky in Finland, so they set about changing that. In 2012, Miika Lipiäinen, Mikko Koskinen, Kalle Valkonen, Miko Heinilä, and Jouni Ritola founded the Kyrö Distillery Company. Eight years later, in August 2020, released their Kyrö Malt rye whisky to great acclaim.

The double pot distilled liquid was aged in new American oak barrels for three to five years and upon release became the first-ever Finnish single batch rye whisky.

In response to the pandemic, in 2020 the brand started producing hand sanitiser to support healthcare workers, through the sales of which the company managed to continue production and avoid making a single redundancy. With a debut malt rye whisky now on the market, the brand is launching an Alder wood smoked expression pencilled for widespread release next year.



27 BLANTON'S



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: SAZERAC

While easily recognisable on back bars for its bottle shape and Kentucky Derby race horse-topped stopper, Blanton's is widely regarded as the bourbon which kickstarted the renaissance of premium American whiskey.

The brand was introduced by Elmer T Lee in 1984 while he was master distiller at Buffalo Trace – which still produces the whiskey today – as the first modern bourbon to be marketed as single barrel. Its global popularity is highlighted by the fact that two-thirds of the votes it received came from outside the US.

Today, Blanton's has four expressions which have garnered international acclaim from the whisky industry. Its

name derives from Colonel Albert B Blanton, who spent 55 years at the Buffalo Trace distillery, working his way up from office boy to president of the whiskey plant.

29 CAOL ILA



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: DIAGEO

Diageo's Caol Ila is the largest-scale distillery on Islay, with a capacity of 6.5 million litres a year. The name is Gaelic for the Sound of Islay, the narrow body of water which separates the island from its neighbour, Jura.

"Caol Ila has remained undiscovered by many. However, its deserving rise in popularity saw the release of three new age statements in June 2002. This malt is a fantastically balanced Islay with wheat beer/cloves and wet grass/light salt fish subtleties," said David Broom, whisky writer.

In early 2019, plans were

approved for the transformation of Caol Ila's distillery visitor centre as part of Diageo's £150m investment in Scotch whisky tourism, linking with the recent opening of the Johnnie Walker experience in central Edinburgh.

Today Caol Ila has four expressions in its portfolio, with its flagship 12 Year Old representing one of the most approachable peated Islay whiskies on the market.

30 WATERFORD



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: IRELAND
OWNER: WATERFORD DISTILLERY

Mark Reynier, the virtuoso who rejuvenated Bruichladdich, has decamped to the south of Ireland to create Waterford. He was drawn to the area in search

of the world's best barley, which he is extraordinarily passionate about. Reynier's lofty goal is to produce the world's most profound single malt, and he believes his relentless focus on high-quality barley leaves Waterford well positioned to take the industry by storm.

It is produced at a former Guinness brewery in Waterford, where Reynier's team creates whisky – he does not include an "e", despite producing it in Ireland – from various single farm origin barleys. The plan is to eventually fuse them to create a masterpiece. Initial bottlings have sold out within minutes, and Reynier believes that demand is "emblematic of the fact that curious, inquisitive folk are bored of what is being offered to them". He feels there is considerable disillusionment among single malt whisky drinkers. "People are now saying, 'where's the flavoursome whisky, where's the honest whisky, where's it gone?' He aims to solve that by producing artisanal whisky with provenance. "If we are talking about real provenance, you've got to have terroir, transparency and traceability," says Reynier.

31 ABERLOUR



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: CHIVAS BROTHERS

Smack bang in the heart of Speyside is the Aberlour distillery, which was built in 1879 by James Fleming. The site underwent significant

reconstruction after a fire broke out in 1898, destroying not only some of the buildings but the whisky stocks too. Since then Aberlour has become one of Speyside's most revered single malts, best-known for its double maturation for at least 12 months in oloroso sherry butts and American oak casks. While undefinable, many critics put Aberlour's unique character down to the influence of its water source St Drostan's Well, on which Fleming built the distillery.

The late whisky expert Michael Jackson said: "Lovers of the richer style of Speyside malt rightly regard Aberlour as being in the top echelon."

32 HAKUSHU



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: JAPAN
OWNER: SUNTORY

Sitting 700m above sea level, the Hakushu distillery is one of the highest in the world.

It is Suntory's second distillery, built in 1973

on the foothills of Mount Kaikomagatake to produce whiskies which are distinctly different from those of Yamazaki.

The cool, humid climate of Hakushu's vast elevated forests, combined with the clear water from the Ojira River, is credited with providing the distillery with unique and exceptional conditions for whisky making.

Not only does the distillery benefit from outstanding conditions for production, it has 24 stills to hit a 3 million-litre capacity, which allows Hakushu to make a wide range of highly regarded single malts.

33 YOICHI

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: JAPAN
OWNER: ASAHI

Nikka's first distillery, built in 1934 by founder Masataka Taketsuru and previously known as the Hokkaido distillery, was specifically located in the town of Yoichi in Hokkaido because of its similar climate to Scotland.

The distillery still uses traditional, direct

coal-fired distillation to produce full-bodied peaty whiskies with its six stills.

The brand launched its first single malt in 1982 and has played a key role in driving the premium Japanese whisky sector forward over the past 40 years.

Today, Yoichi has its non-age statement single malt as well as a vast array of cask-finished whiskies and limited-edition bottlings, highlighted by a 2019 release to celebrate the 50th anniversary of sister distillery Miyagikyo, which sold out in emphatic style.



34 TALISKER



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: DIAGEO

Hugh and Kenneth MacAskill built the Talisker Distillery on the Scottish island of Skye in 1830 and, while it changed hands several times, by the end of the 19th century it had become one of the bestselling single malts in Scotland.

However, despite shutting down to preserve barley supplies during the Second World War and a fire destroying the still house in 1960, Talisker bounced back to become a leading single malt known for its maritime flavour.

Under Diageo's ownership, Talisker remains one of three working distilleries on the island and it plays a central role in the company's annual World Class bartender competition, which often sees some of the very best 'tenders visit the distillery to create unique drinks.

35 GLENFIDDICH

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: WILLIAM GRANT & SONS

In 1886, the legendary William Grant began building the original Glenfiddich distillery with the help of his nine children and a stone mason. Gaelic for Valley of the Deer, Glenfiddich's first drop was distilled on Christmas Day 1887, and more than 100 years later the brand is one of the biggest single malt Scotch brands in the world.

According to *Drinks International's* The Millionaires' Club, Glenfiddich hit 1.2 million 9-litre cases in 2020, despite the hardships of the pandemic. In 1961, the brand developed the triangular-shaped bottle which has become synonymous with Glenfiddich all around the world, and just two years later it became the first single malt Scotch advertised outside Scotland. More recently, the brand launched Grande Couronne, a 26-year-old whisky aged in American and European oak casks.



36 KILCHOMAN



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: KILCHOMAN DISTILLERY

Kilchoman was the first distillery built on Islay for more

than 120 years when it was erected in the early 2000s by the Wills family. This makes the only family-run distillery on the island a modern one by Islay's standards, so its rapid rise in the whisky industry is a truly remarkable feat.

The whisky is made from 100% Islay barley, which is cultivated on 250 acres surrounding the distillery, and every step of its production takes place on the remote island.

"With seven working distilleries on Islay at the time, and also 100 distilleries in



WE DECIDED TO START A FARM DISTILLERY AND REALLY FOCUS ON HERITAGE, TRADITION AND FARM DISTILLING

Scotland, it would have been foolish to start a distillery like the others," said founder Anthony Wills. "We decided to start a farm distillery and really focus on heritage, tradition and farm distilling, which Islay had a lot of in the late 1700s to early 1800s. That was why we built on a working farm, grew some of the barley and did the whole process on site, so we had a uniqueness that nobody else was doing."

37 PAUL JOHN



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: INDIA
OWNER: JOHN DISTILLERIES

Despite being less than 10 years old, Paul John has exploded on to the world whiskies scene with its collection of premium peated and unpeated single malts. The brand was launched in the UK in 2012 before being introduced in Goa, India, the following year and then Bangalore in 2015. The company has been producing blended whiskies since 1996 and entered the single malt category in 2008.

Master distiller Michael D'souza decided to use mainly Indian ingredients in the production of its single malts and in Goa, where Paul John's

single malt distillery is based, the tropical monsoon climate provides heat and humidity for most of the year, which speeds up the maturation of its whiskies.

Paul John now has a wide range of single malts with varying degrees of peat influence and an array of interesting cask finishes which have caught the imagination of whisky fans globally.

38 AMRUT



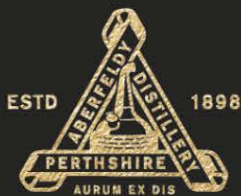
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: INDIA
OWNER: AMRUT DISTILLERIES

The other major player in premium Indian whisky is Amrut. Located in Bangalore, the company originally supplied the Indian military with liquor before branching out into the single malt whisky industry under Neelakanta Rao Jagdale, the second-generation chairman and managing director.

While the company originally started out producing Indian rum and brandy, Amrut released the first ever Indian single malt in the UK in 2004. Since then the brand has risen to international acclaim and maintains the same production standards as Scotch whisky, making it one of world whiskies' most respected brands.

Today, Amrut has a wide range of single malts aged in a variety of casks, such as Madeira and oloroso sherry, and also experiments with triple distillation and other innovative techniques to produce unique expressions.

AWARDED
OVER 150 GOLD
MEDALS



ABERFELDY

THE GOLDEN DRAM

SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY



HONEYED RICHNESS
in EVERY DROP



39 ABERFELDY

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: BACARDI

Forming the basis of Bacardi's blended Scotch brand Dewar's, Aberfeldy also produces one of the most famous 12 Year Old single malt whiskies. The distillery opened in 1898 and was the only one ever built by the famed Dewar family, which produces whiskies notorious for their rich honey notes.

Today, Aberfeldy's 12, 16 and 21 Year Olds are the mainstays of its single malt portfolio, while the brand also produces a wide range of age statements and interesting cask finishes.

Most recently, it launched a limited-edition 18 Year Old finished in French red wine casks from French wine-making region Côte Rôtie.



a style, bourbon is meant to be more approachable and balanced, and Dickel bourbon is a great entry point into our whole portfolio.”

42 MAKER'S MARK



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: BEAM SUNTORY

The team at Maker's Mark strives to distil its bourbon to the lowest proof of any US whiskey distillery, resulting in a bourbon that retains a rich flavour. It is renowned for its red wax seal and its smooth, easy-drinking credentials, but it nevertheless performs well in blind tasting competitions.

Maker's Mark secured a gold medal for its Wood Finishing Series 2021 Limited Release: FAE-01 at the latest International Spirits Challenge, along with silver medals for the core brand, the prominent Maker's Mark 46 extension, and three other variants. The team at the distillery has displayed its versatility with the Wood Finishing Series releases, which provide a nice step up for Maker's Mark fans.

Disciples can now even rent the original Maker's Mark family home in Bardstown, Kentucky, for the night.

“Owned and operated by the founding family of Maker's Mark Distillery, you'll enjoy a one-of-a-kind opportunity to experience an intimate piece of Kentucky bourbon history like an insider,” wrote the family of the 1820s mansion, which was purchased and renovated by eighth-generation whiskey maker Rob Samuels this year.

40 ELIJAH CRAIG



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: HEAVEN HILL

The Reverend Elijah Craig is thought to be the first person to have used charred barrels to age his whiskey, which is now part of the law for bourbon. He inspired this brand, which is produced at the independent Heaven Hill Distillery in Bardstown, Kentucky. Like all the best bourbons, it is full-bodied, rich, robust and smooth. The Elijah Craig range includes the flagship Elijah Craig Small Batch, made from batches of 200 barrels or fewer of bourbon aged between eight and 12 years. It has been named Whisky of the Year by *Whisky*

Advocate, which referred to it as “a mouth-filling, deeply satisfying whiskey, amazingly palatable even at full proof, that will delight many drinkers at a great price”. Elijah Craig won two gold medals at the International Spirits Challenge 2021, for its Barrel Proof A121 and Barrel Proof C920 expressions.

41 GEORGE DICKEL



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: DIAGEO

George A Dickel was a German-born American businessman who became one of Tennessee's leading liquor distributors in

the 19th century. He garnered a reputation for selling some of the smoothest and most mellow spirits in the Nashville region.

Dickel preferred whiskey made in the winter months, because he felt it proffered a smoother taste, so the company began advertising its Geo A Dickel's Cascade Tennessee whiskey as “mellow as moonlight”.

His eponymous brand is still going strong today as part of the Diageo portfolio. It is renowned for using the Scotch “whisky” spelling, unlike its competitors in Tennessee. Diageo still ensures the whiskey is chilled before undergoing the charcoal-mellow filtration known as the Lincoln County Process at its Cascade Hollow Distillery. It is the only Tennessee distillery to add in this step, which is designed for smoothness. This year, George Dickel released an 8 Year Old blended whisky to celebrate National Bourbon Day, and it will go into the core range. “Dickel Bourbon is an opportunity for us to finally share this quality liquid with the rest of the world,” said Cascade Hollow general manager Nicole Austin. “As

HE DIDN'T JOIN THE BOURBON
MOVEMENT. HE STARTED IT.

Elijah Craig

The FATHER *of* BOURBON

REVEREND ELIJAH CRAIG FOUNDED
HIS DISTILLERY IN 1789 IN KENTUCKY.
HE IS CREDITED WITH BEING THE
FIRST DISTILLER TO AGE HIS
WHISKEY IN CHARRED OAK BARRELS,
EARNING HIS PLACE IN HISTORY AS
THE FATHER OF BOURBON.



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43 STARWARD

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: AUSTRALIA
OWNER: NEW WORLD WHISKY DISTILLERY

Starward has acquired a burgeoning reputation as one of the most exciting New World whisky producers in the business. The single malts are produced at the New World Whisky Distillery in Victoria, Australia, using Australian malted barley and aged in Australian apara fortified wine casks. It is billed as whisky for “a curious, food-obsessed generation”, and it has certainly earned a loyal following among Millennial hipsters. It has none of the stuffiness associated with some Scotch brands – consumers are actively encouraged to bring it to a barbecue and drink it with tonic – yet this is also serious whisky for connoisseurs. Starward has just become the official whisky partner of the Michelin Guide in North America, highlighting its desire to expand across the continent and to gain listings at more high-end restaurants. “We’ve crafted our whiskies to be the most food friendly whisky you’ll ever taste,” says founder David Vitale.



44 CRAIGELLACHIE



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: BACARDI

Alexander Edward and Peter Mackie set up the Craigellachie Distillery in the heart of Speyside back in 1891. Renowned architect Charles Doig was tasked with designing this landmark distillery close to the confluence of the rivers Spey and Fiddich, and the number of stills doubled in the 1960s. It became part of the Diageo empire, but was sold to Bacardi, along with John Dewar & Sons, in 1998. Craigellachie has launched a range of age statements – a 13 Year Old, 17 Year Old and 23 Year Old – under Bacardi’s ownership, and the brand continues to go from strength to strength. Its 13 Year Old and 17 Year Old variants won gold medals at the International Spirits Challenge

2021, as these unconventional, muscular whiskies delighted our judges.

45 GEORGE T STAGG



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: US
OWNER: SAZERAC

An entrepreneurial whiskey lover called George T Stag built arguably the most dominant American distillery of the 19th century, during a time fondly referred to as the Gilded Age of Bourbon. Nowadays, it sits within the Antique Collection series of the world-famous Buffalo Trace Distillery, which is owned by Sazerac Company. It is famous for its quality, its rarity – it is traditionally distributed just once a year on a strict allocation basis – and its cult following among bourbon enthusiasts. This uncut and unfiltered bourbon ages for nearly a decade before it is released to its devotees across

the United States and further afield. It won a gold medal at the International Spirits Challenge 2021, leading the charge for Sazerac Company, which was named American Whiskey Distiller of the Year.

46 PENDERYN



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: WALES
OWNER: THE WELSH WHISKY COMPANY

When Penderyn first laid down barrels 21 years ago, the Welsh whisky industry had been dormant for almost a century. From the outset, the brand was keen to distance itself stylistically from Scotch whisky, and from its distillery in the Brecon Beacons, Penderyn produced a pure and strong spirit, lighter and less oily than traditional Scotch – a character



THIS UNCUT AND UNFILTERED BOURBON AGES FOR NEARLY A DECADE BEFORE IT IS RELEASED TO ITS DEVOTEES

owed to the unique single copper pot Faraday still. Penderyn whisky is now available in 45 countries and 38 US states and growing in volume and value sales. Rather than leaning on any Welsh whisky tradition, Penderyn has opted to create a new heritage for the region. Chief executive Stephen Davies spearheaded plans for a Geographical Indicator for single malt Welsh whisky, officially applying for the recognition in July. Beyond growing the identity of Welsh whisky, Penderyn itself has expanded this year, opening a second distillery site Llandudno in North Wales, with a city-centre distillery site in Swansea given the green light to open next year.

47 COMPASS BOX

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: COMPASS BOX WHISKY

Compass Box has taken an uncommon route to become one of modern Scotch whisky's most innovative brands. It was founded by American entrepreneur and former Johnnie Walker marketing director John Glaser, who in 2000 began blending whiskies that he bought from Scottish distillers in the kitchen of his west London home. Within the same year, the brand had launched its debut commercial release, Hedonism, one of the first blended grain whiskies to come to market.

Since then, the brand has been responsible for more than 50 bottlings, each unique in concept and style. From humble beginnings, Compass Box now has two dedicated blending rooms in London and has laid down stocks of maturing whiskies in Scotland. Its newest release, the fruit-forward Orchard House, represents a milestone for Compass Box. The first addition to the core range produced almost entirely from whiskies aged by the brand, according to Glaser, "it's more 'our whisky' than anything we've made before".



48 THE GLENROTHES



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: EDDRINGTON GROUP

The Glenrothes refers to itself as one of Speyside's "hidden gems". It focuses on producing high-quality single malts quietly and without fanfare, so it may be somewhat surprising to see it featured on this list. However, it has garnered a strong reputation among the buyers, bar owners, distributors, writers, educators and category experts who make up our academy. It performed well in the vote for this inaugural World's Most Admired Whiskies list and it is widely regarded as an outstanding producer of complex, beautifully balanced whisky. It is steeped in heritage, having been established in

1879, and it now sits within the core range of Edrington, alongside The Macallan and Highland Park. The shutdown of the travel retail channel has led to a challenging year for The Glenrothes, but it has great potential to come roaring back when international travel resumes apace.

49 AUCHENTOSHAN



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SCOTLAND
OWNER: BEAM SUNTORY

Irish refugees created Auchentoshan on the outskirts of Glasgow all the way back in 1825. It remains one of the last active distilleries in the Lowlands, and it is still thriving to this day. Auchentoshan is now part of Beam Suntory, but it holds its own in a large and

formidable portfolio. Its 12 Year Old and Three Wood variants both won gold medals at the International Spirits Challenge this year, adding to an enviable haul for the brand in recent times. The core American Oak variant continues to grow in prominence, while more premium offerings such as Blood Oak, 18 Year Old and 21 Year Old have delighted critics. Recent marketing innovations include "trick eye" outdoor advertising in Singapore and home tasting kits launched to celebrate Chinese New Year.

50 JAMESON



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: IRELAND
OWNER: IRISH DISTILLERS

Jameson is firmly established as the market leader within

the burgeoning Irish whiskey category. It enjoyed 14% volume sales growth in the year to June 30, 2021, reaching 8.6 million cases on a global basis. That is an impressive performance amid difficult trading conditions, but it highlights the strength and resilience of this key brand in the Pernod Ricard empire. That cemented its status as one of the world's a top five bestselling whisk(e)y brands. In the key US market, Jameson sold 4 million cases, driven by Black Barrel – which won the trophy as the best Irish whiskey at the International Spirits Challenge 2021 – while it continues to flourish in emerging markets, with strong growth in Nigeria (216%), India (85%), Brazil (67%), China (45%) and Japan (13%). It continues to innovate, with the latest release a Jameson whiskey spirit drink inspired by the Old Fashioned cocktail, blending Jameson with orange juice. "This innovation builds on that craft and we are incredibly proud to share this exceptionally well balanced and intensely zesty creation with new and existing whiskey fans looking to explore and experiment," said Kevin O'Gorman, who recently took over as master distiller at Irish Distillers.



THE LIST

NO.	BRAND, COUNTRY
1	YAMAZAKI, JAPAN MOST ADMIRED WORLD WHISKY
2	REDBREAST, IRELAND MOST ADMIRED IRISH WHISKEY
3	LAGAVULIN, SCOTLAND MOST ADMIRED SCOTCH WHISKY
4	MICHTER'S, US MOST ADMIRED AMERICAN WHISKEY
5	THE BALVENIE, SCOTLAND
6	ARDBEG, SCOTLAND
7	BRUICHLADDICH, SCOTLAND
8	SPRINGBANK, SCOTLAND
9	CHICHIBU, JAPAN
10	HIBIKI, JAPAN
11	BUNNAHABHAIN, SCOTLAND
12	NIKKA, JAPAN
13	JOHNNIE WALKER, SCOTLAND
14	BOWMORE, SCOTLAND
15	THE MACALLAN, SCOTLAND
16	WOODFORD RESERVE, US
17	TEELING, IRELAND
18	FOUR ROSES, US
19	LAPHROAIG, SCOTLAND
20	UNCLE NEAREST, US
21	GLENDRONACH, SCOTLAND
22	COTSWOLDS, ENGLAND
23	GLENFARCLAS, SCOTLAND
24	KAVALAN, TAIWAN
25	GLENMORANGIE, SCOTLAND

NO.	BRAND, COUNTRY
26	GLEN SCOTIA, SCOTLAND
27	BLANTON'S, US
28	KYRÖ, FINLAND
29	CAOL ILA, SCOTLAND
30	WATERFORD, IRELAND
31	ABERLOUR, SCOTLAND
32	HAKUSHU, JAPAN
33	YOICHI, JAPAN
34	TALISKER, SCOTLAND
35	GLENFIDDICH, SCOTLAND
36	KILCHOMAN, SCOTLAND
37	PAUL JOHN, INDIA
38	AMRUT, INDIA
39	ABERFELDY, SCOTLAND
40	ELIJAH CRAIG, US
41	GEORGE DICKEL, US
42	MAKER'S MARK, US
43	STARWARD, AUSTRALIA
44	CRAIGELLACHIE, SCOTLAND
45	GEORGE T STAGG, US
46	PENDERYN, WALES
47	COMPASS BOX, SCOTLAND
48	GLENROTHES, SCOTLAND
49	AUCHENTOSHAN, SCOTLAND
50	JAMESON, IRELAND

NIKKA WHISKY



NIKKA WHISKY
FROM
THE BARREL
alc.51.4°

ウイスキー

原材料 モルト、グレーン

●容量 750ml ●アルコール分 51%

製造者 ニッカウヰスキー株式会社6
東京都港区南青山5-4-31

NIKKA WHISKY
FROM
THE BARREL

Please drink responsibly.